LESSON PLAN

BY STEPHEN PERKINS & ROB SCHAEFER

**COURSE**: U.S. HISTORY

**SUBJECT:** NATIONAL TRAGEDIES

**GRADE:** 6TH&7TH

**TIME:** 30-45 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** PEN & PAPER, HANDOUT (PROVIDED BY TEACHER)

**PROCEDURE:**

* DISCUSS WITH CLASS THE CONCEPT OF A NATIONAL TRAGEDY (5 MINUTES)
* EXPLAIN LESSON TO STUDENTS (1 MINUTE)
* DISTRIBUTE HANDOUT PROVIDED BY TEACHER (1 MINUTE)
* INSTRUCT STUDENTS TO READ HANDOUT (1 MINUTE)
* ANSWER STUDENTS QUESTIONS RELATED TO ASSIGNMENT (1 MINUTE)
* READ REAGAN’S SPEECH ON THE CHALLENGER EXPLOSION (5 MINUTES)
* BREAK STUDENTS INTO GROUPS OF THREE (1 MINUTE)
* INSTRUCT STUDENTS TO DISCUSS WHAT THEY HAVE READ (8 MINUTES)
* AS A WHOLE CLASS DISCUSS THE ASSIGNMENT (10 MINUTES)
* ANSWER QUESTIONS FOUND ON THE BACK OF HANDOUT (7 MINUTES)

**HOMEWORK:** DUE TOMORROW A ONE PAGE PAPER DISCUSSING YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH A NATIONAL TRAGEDY OR HOW YOU DEFINE A NATIONAL TRAGEDY

**MAJOR GOALS:** TO INCREASE STUDENTS KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF:

* WHAT CONSTITUTES A NATIONAL TRAGEDY
* HOW AMERICA IS AFFECTED BY OUR NATIONAL TRAGEDIES
* HOW AMERICA IS AFFECTED BY OTHER COUNTRIES NATIONAL TRAGEDIES

**MINOR GOALS:** INCREASE AWARENESS OF RONALD REAGAN AND THE NASA SPACE PROGRAM

LESSON PLAN CRITIQUE

BY STEPHEN PERKINS & ROB SCHAEFER

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**GRADE:** 6TH&7TH

**TIME:** 30-45 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** PEN/PAPER, COMPUTER/INTERNET ACCESS, FLOOR SPACE, EASEL/PAINT

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

* PRESIDENT REAGAN’S ADDRESS TO THE NATION

<http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/12886b.htm>

* PHOTOS & ACTIVITIES <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/education/For%20Educators/challenger-teachingresources.pdf>

**PROCEDURE:** DISCUSS WITH CLASS THE CONCEPT OF A NATIONAL TRAGEDY (5 MINUTES)

* EXPLAIN LESSON TO STUDENTS (1 MINUTE)
* DISTRIBUTE HANDOUT BY TEACHER (1 MINUTE)
* INSTRUCT STUDENTS TO READ HANDOUT\*
* ANSWER STUDENTS QUESTIONS RELATED TO ASSIGNMENT (1 MINUTE)
* READ REAGAN’S SPEECH ON THE CHALLENGER EXPLOSION (5 MINUTES)\*
* BREAK STUDENTS INTO GROUPS OF THREE (1 MINUTE)
* INSTRUCT STUDENTS TO DISCUSS WHAT THEY READ OR VIEWED (8 MINUTES)
* AS A WHOLE CLASS DISCUSS THE ASSIGNMENT (10 MINUTES)
* ANSWER QUESTIONS FOUND ON THE BACK OF HANDOUT (7 MINUTES)^\*
* \*FOR VISUAL LEARNERS AND PEOPLE WHO PROCESS INFORMATION BEST AUDIOLOGICALLY HAVE THEM VIEW 2 OUT OF THE 3 LINKS:
* REAGAN’S SPEECH (I.E. ADDRESS TO THE NATION) <HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=5JKIZ7J20EA>
* A TRIBUTE TO THE VICTIMS OF THE CHALLENGER EXPLOSION (SET TO THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER)

<HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=G6N9VR-D24G>

* THE ACTUAL EXPLOSION

<HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=g6N9vR-d24G>

**^\*** FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH PEN & PAPER TASKS ADMINISTER QUESTIONS ORALLY

**^\*** USING PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ASTRONAUTS, THE NASA SPACE PROGRAM, THE EXPLOSION AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT MATERIALS RELATED TO THE ASSIGNMENT ENGAGE STUDENT IN RELEVANT CONVERSATION RELATED TO THE ASSIGNMENT WITH AN EMPHASIS ON WHAT THE STUDENT HAS LEARNED ABOUT NATIONAL TRAGEDIES.

RATIONALE

BY STEPHEN PERKINS & ROB SCHAEFER

We created a lesson plan for a 6th or 7th grade history class related to a specific national tragedy: the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger on January 28th, 1986. The original lesson plan presented was created from materials that were extracted from the archives of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum Education Department. The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum Education Department provided information related to the Challenger explosion as well as the former President’s address to the nation.

After evaluating the initial lesson plan, we created a modified version of the original. Some of the rationales for the changes that we made to the existing lesson plan were: wanting to meet the needs of all diverse learners; presenting materials in multiple formats (i.e. written, video, images as well as audio); and taking into consideration each students various cognitive abilities.

Some of the things we have learned about universal design for learning include the importance of using this technique when creating any lesson plan, how universal design for learning helps to meet the needs of all diverse learners and the need for multisensory, interactive approaches which help facilitate both teaching and learning.

I have learned that the integration of technology within the classroom is extremely important. I have also learned that in order for the integration of technology to be successful it is necessary for students with auditory processing impairments to have an alternative means of communicating. For example, granting a student who has auditory processing impairments access to the internet might enable them to find related materials on web sites such as Google, YouTube or Ask.com. Furthermore, presenting materials using multiple approaches, such as use of the internet and screen readers and speech synthesizers enables all students to benefit.

Learning history does not have to be reduced to memorizing facts, dates, places and events from a textbook. Today’s students have the opportunities to learn by accessing information from multiple sources including online museums like the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. Teachers today have the advantage of being able to teach without having a mastery of content. The widespread availability of various resources, which were previously unavailable to teachers and students now only limit us via our imagination.

We have learned that each person brings a unique perspective to the project that we have presented. Along the way, we have learned how to compensate for each other’s weaknesses as well as complement each other’s strengths. We have also learned that successful collaboration depends on mutual compromise.

Some of the sources and artifacts that we found helpful can be accessed by viewing the following web sites:

<http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/12886b.htm>

<http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/education/For%20Educators/challenger-teachingresources.pdf>

<HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=5JKIZ7J20EA>

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